

National Reporting System - Overview

This document contains an overview of the NRS and the information which can be found in the 2009 edition of the NRS Guidelines. Please visit the NRS website for more information.

<http://www.nrsweb.org/>

Chapter I: History and Overview of the NRS

Descriptive and Participation Measures (page 8)

The NRS descriptive measures are student demographics, status in several areas, and goals for attending. These measures allow for a description and understanding of who attends adult education programs and for what reasons participation measures—contact hours and program enrollment type—are collected for both descriptive and analytic purposes.

Secondary Measures (page 8)

The NRS secondary measures are optional measures of student outcomes and status that States are not required to use and should not be used as a basis for assessing State performance under WIA. The secondary measures are in the areas of employment, community, and family.

NRS Methodologies (page 9)

To help ensure comparability of measures across States, the NRS has established procedures for collecting all of the NRS measures. The NRS has three methodologies: direct program reporting, local follow-up survey, and data matching.

NRS Guidebooks, Resources, and Revised Guidelines (page 10)

For a complete list of guidebooks and resources, see your director. There are also two NRS web sites. NRSWEB, www.nrsweb.org, and NRSONLINE, www.nrsonline.org, both include comprehensive information about NRS and links to NRS documents and resources.

Chapter II NRS Measure Definitions and Data Collection Methods

Educational Gain (page 15)

Educational gain measures the primary purpose of the ABE program: to improve the basic literacy skills of participants.

- **Definition:** Learner completes or advances one or more educational functioning levels from the starting level measured on entry into the program.
- **Applicable Population:** All learners.
- **Federal Reporting:** Total number of learners who complete a level during the program is reported, and a rate of percentage of level completion is computed. The number who continue in the program after completing a level, the number who fail to complete a level and leave the program, and the number who remain in the same level are recorded to obtain a fuller picture of student flow and retention.

Educational Functioning Levels (page 22)

All the descriptors do not provide a complete or comprehensive delineation of all of the skills at each level but provide examples to guide assessment and instruction. States and local programs may use additional or different skills and levels if desired, as long as these skills and levels can be matched to NRS levels and skills can be measured with assessments that meet standard psychometric criteria for validity and reliability.

State Responsibilities in Assessing and Measuring Educational Gain (page 23)

For the educational functioning levels to be meaningful, assessments need to be administered in a standardized and consistent way by all programs in each State. The following guidelines help ensure valid and reliable assessment and measurement of education gain within the State.

Standardized Assessment (page 24)

- Intended purpose of the instrument
- Procedures used to develop/maintain the instrument
- Matching instrument content to NRS educational functioning level descriptors
- Matching scores on the instrument to NRS educational functioning levels
- Reliability/classification consistency
- Construct validity
- For more information on these topics, refer to pages 22-25 of the NRS manual.

Placing Students in Educational Functioning Levels (EFL page 27)

The NRS requires all local programs assess and place all students into an EFL at intake and at least one other time during the program year. After initial assessment a follow-up assessment should occur after a set instruction time, either in hours or months, as determined by the State.

Use of different assessment forms

- Pretest administration time
- Placement policy based on initial assessment
- Established time for post-assessment
- Level advancement policy based on post-assessment
- Staff training on administration of assessments

For more information on these topics, refer to the NRS manual.

Follow-up Outcome Measures (page 28)

- Measure #1: Entered employment—whether the student obtained a job.
- Measure #2: Retained employment—whether the student remained in the job.
- Measure #3: Receipt of secondary school diploma or GED certificate.
- Measure #4: Entered postsecondary education or training.
- States are not required to collect all of the follow-up measures on all students, but only

on students who have the goal of achieving one or more of these outcomes.

Guidance for Collecting the Follow-up Measures (page 31)

The NRS offers two methodologies for collecting the follow-up measures: a local program follow-up survey and data matching. Within the NRS, States may use either methodology or a combination of both to collect follow-up measures. For a complete explanation of these methodologies please refer to pages 30-39 of the NRS manual.

Core Demographics, Status, and Participation Measures (page 41)

The NRS includes required descriptive measures, which are student demographics, student status in several areas, and goals for attending. These measures allow for a description and understanding of who attends adult education programs and for what reasons. The measures also facilitate analyzing the performance of students attending adult education, such as unemployed students or students receiving public assistance. The demographic measures include ethnicity, age, and gender. The status measures include employment status and whether the student has a disability or is on public assistance. The NRS requires collection of student goals—both a main and a secondary reason—for attending the program.

There are two participation measures—contact hours and program enrollment type—collected for both descriptive and analytic purposes.

Demographic and Status Measure Definitions (page 41)

- Measure #1: Ethnicity—the ethnic category to which the learner self-identifies, appears to belong to, or is regarded in the community as belonging.
- Measure #2: Gender
- Student Status Measure #1: Labor force status
- Student Status Measure #2: Public assistance status
- Student Status Measure #3: Disability status
- Student Status Measure #4: Rural Residency Status
- Student Status Measure #5: Learner Goals for Attending

Additional Guidance on Goal Setting (page 45)

- All students are assumed to have at least one goal: development of literacy skills.
- Goal-setting Process: Students meet with teachers/counselors to identify and set goals.
- Identify Attainable Short- and Long-Term Goals: Set a timeline.

Student Participation Measures (page 46)

- Student Participation Measure #1: Contact Hours
- Student Participation Measure #2: Program Enrollment Type: ABE or ESL
- Definition: Learner is enrolled in the following programs and institutions:
- For more information on these topics, refer to pages 44-45 of the NRS manual.

Secondary Student Status and Outcome Measures (page 49)

The NRS secondary measures are optional measures of student status and outcomes that States are not required to collect and that are not used as a basis for assessing. The NRS includes these measures because many stakeholders during the consensus building process believed that these measures would be important to the goals and purposes of adult education. Secondary student status measures low income, displaced homemaker, and single parent. The secondary measures are in the areas of employment, community, and family.

Optional Student Status Measures (page 50)

There are five optional student status measures.

- Secondary Student Status Measure #1: Low-Income Status
- Secondary Student Status Measure #2: Displaced Homemaker
- Secondary Student Status Measure #3: Single Parent Status
- Secondary Student Status Measure #4: Dislocated Worker
- Secondary Student Status Measure #5: Learning-Disabled Adult

Chapter III The NRS Data Collection Process

The NRS produces a set of measures that describes adult education students, their participation, and the outcomes that they achieve. These are used at the State and national levels to demonstrate whom the adult education program serves and its impact on learners' educational and employment-related outcomes.

Chapter IV Quality Control and Reporting

Data Quality Checklist (page 69)

To allow the U.S. Department of Education to assess the quality of NRS data, states must complete the NRS data quality checklist. States submit this checklist with their annual NRS data submission. This section includes: Data Foundation and Structure, Data Collection and Verification, Data Analysis and Reporting, Staff Development, and Levels of Quality and Quality Improvement.

Improving Data Quality (page 70)

The data quality checklist defines data quality in the NRS and provides guidance to States on how to improve quality. The States can improve quality by training local staff, improving local data collection, and local monitoring and data audits.

- Training
- Local Data Collection
- Local Monitoring: Data Reviews and Data Auditing

For more information on these topics, refer to the NRS manual.

Reporting Capabilities (page 76)

For Federal reporting, the NRS requires that each State annually submit aggregated summary tables of descriptive and performance data on the core measures. Each local program's software must have the capability to create these reports and submit an aggregated report to the State.

Federal Reporting Tables (page 78)

Several reporting tables are provided to allow for separate reporting about special populations on the core indicators. Instructions for completing each table are included with that table.